

Fact sheet on Conservation 2000:

Conservation 2000 is a comprehensive program at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Department of Agriculture (IDOA). The Department of Agriculture works closely with local landowners and Soil and Water Conservation Districts to address localized problems with incentive-based programs. Both programs are important to address critical water quality and wildlife habitat issues.

Conservation 2000 at the Department of Natural Resources

The program at IDNR was created to look beyond traditional management of public lands to create local partnerships on the watershed scale and deliver collaborative solutions. Involving local private and public stakeholders and conservation-community interests, the program works to provide grant money and technical support for land acquisition and easements, research, and habitat restoration.

The elements of the program at IDNR are the Ecosystems Program, Critical Trends Assessment Program, EcoWatch, and the Illinois Natural Resources Information Network.

Ecosystem Partnerships

There are currently 41 separate ecosystem partnerships, consisting of local stakeholders from the spectrum of natural resource perspectives. Many of these ecosystem partnerships are organized around watersheds, areas of land that are drained by a river or stream. These watershed-based partnerships can identify problems and solutions in terms of complete ecological areas, rather than areas within the boundaries of a particular unit of government.

Assessment of environmental trends

The Conservation 2000 program has also funded several ongoing assessments of the state of Illinois' natural resources. Included in these performance assessments are the Critical Trends Assessment Program, where professional scientist collect information and compare the information against historical data to determine trends.

Success of the program

Since the creation of the program in 1995, Conservation 2000 has awarded more than \$29.9 million in grants, which has leveraged over \$37.8 million in matching funds. The program has restored more than 62,000 acres of wildlife habitat, and over 5,580 acres have been purchased or placed into conservation easements.

Conservation 2000 at the Department of Agriculture

The IDOA's Conservation 2000 is an important conservation and environmental tool for our state. It plays a vital part in reducing soil erosion and sedimentation from agricultural land and along stream banks. By helping to prevent the runoff of farm chemicals into streams and aquifers, Conservation 2000 is also one of the most important water quality protection programs we have in Illinois.

Conservation 2000 provides funding for the following agriculture-related programs: the sustainable agriculture grant program, the conservation practices cost-share program, the streambank stabilization and restoration program, and the soil and water conservation district grants program.

For more detailed information on the IDOA Conservation 2000 program, point your browser to:
<http://www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/conserv/index.html>